last six months ending 27.3.99 are as follows;

Commodities	Percentage variation in 6 months during 26.9.98 to 27.3.99
Rice	6.7
Wheat	13.5
Gram	—7.1
Arhar	—6.6
Potatoes	—67.5
Onion	—74.6
Vanaspati	0.3
Groundnut oil	—18.1
Mustard Oil	—15.3
Tea	—21.6
Sugar	0.5
Salt	4.3

(c) There are no agencies to determine the consumer prices of essential commodities in the country as the same are determined by market forces of demand and supply.

(d) Apart from certain long term measures to increase the production of essential goods, imports of items which are in short supply like pulses and edible oil have been placed under DGL for imports. Import duty on pulses has been abolished and duty on the import of edible oils has been reduced during 1998-99 by 10 percent in order to augment the total availability of these items. Some of the essential commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, palmolein and kerosene are also supplied through public distribution system at below market prices. Stringent actions are being taken by the State/U.T. Governments against hoarders, black merketeers and others indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act.

Save Food Campaign

2841. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Government plan to 'save food campaign' and avoid waste of food stuffs to cope up with the shortages of food;

(b) if so, the quantum of food saved under the scheme;

(c) whether it is a fact that FCI is having a huge quantity of foodgrains stored in their godowns, which is outdated and not fit for human consumption;

(d) if so, why it was allowed to be spoiled; and

(e) whether Government have fixed any responsibility for this negligence and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) In order to minimise post harvest losses in foodgrains at farm level, the Government of India has been operating Save Grain Campaign (SGC) scheme since 1969-70 to educate the farming community on scientific storage of foodgrains by adopting recommended code of storage practices. The techniques of scientific storage of foodgrains developed by the Indian Grain Storage Management and Research Institute (IGRMI) are disseminated to the farming community through 17 regional office of the SGC by way of training, demonstration and publicity.

(c) A quantity of 1.47 lakh M.T. of damaged foodgrains unfit for human consumption was available with the Food Corporation of India as on 1.2.99 as against a total quantity of 153.19 lakh MT held in storage.

(d) and (e) The damage to the foodgrains occurred due to natural

calamities such as cyclone, floods, unseasonal rains etc. and not due to any negligence of staff.

Base Depots of FCI in Orissa

2842. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of base depots of FCI in Orissa for supply of foodgrains under PDS/GPD system, district-wise;

(b) whether they are sufficient to meet the requirement;

(c) if not in which districts depots have not been opened so far;

(d) whether Government propose to open base depots in those districts;

(e) if so, the details thereof, location wise;

(f) if names of depots in which foodgrains are not supplied as per their requirements; and

(g) the steps taken by Government to supply sufficient foodgraints to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) (a) The term "base depot" is normally used in connection with the hilly States and are opened/operated in hilly States under Hill Transport Subsidy Scheme for the purpose of reimbursing the actual transportation cost of lifting of foodgrains by the concerned State Governments from these base depots to the declared Principal Distribution Centres.

FCI has opened the depots at various important centres in each State covering most of the Revenue Districts in the respective States with a view to issue foodgrains/stocks against the allocations made by the Government every month under PDS.

A statement showing details of depots in Orissa is attached. (*See* below)

(b) to (e) By and large, the depots located in the State of Orissa have been found to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the allocation made to the State Government.

Out of the total 30 Revenue districts in Orissa, FCI does not have owned/hired depots in 7 Revenue districts.

Whenever any shortage of depot is felt for covering a particular area, steps are taken to open a new depot either by constructing FCI's own godown or by hiring the same for CWC/SWC and private parties.

(f) and (g) No such complaint has been received from the State Government of Orissa. FCI arrange inter/intra State/district movement of foodgrains as per the requirement/allotment of a particular depot/district well in advance to ensure that supplies do not get disturbed for this reason.